A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR CCRC RESIDENTS

SEEING DEEPER WITH PERPLEXITY

How CCRC Residents Can Use the SabuSense Way of Thinking and the Five Whys Method with Perplexity to Produce Reports, Presentations, and Books — Fast, Free, and Polished

SABUSENSE

See the whole system, not just the parts — Lew Rhodes' "system-seeing" philosophy for finding root causes.

FIVE WHYS

Ask "Why?" five times — Toyota's root-cause method that drills from symptoms to the real problem.

Run through Perplexity — free, fast, and polished

MEL HAAS AND PERPLEXITY.AI

Mel's Amazon Books

SEEING DEEPER WITH PERPLEXITY

How to Use the SabuSense Way of Thinking and the Five Whys Method with Perplexity to Produce Reports, Presentations, and Books — Fast, Free, and Polished

A Practical Guide for CCRC Residents

You already have the knowledge. You already have the experience. What you need is a fast, easy, free way to turn what you know into smooth, accurate, polished copy — whether it is a report for your resident council, a presentation for your club, or a book on Amazon.

This book gives you that way. It combines a powerful thinking method — the SabuSense "system-seeing" philosophy developed by Lew Rhodes — with the Five Whys questioning technique, and shows you how to run the whole process through Perplexity, the free internet research tool at perplexity.ai.

The result: you can go from a topic idea to publication-ready copy in a single sitting.

Everything in this book works with the free version of Perplexity. You do not need a paid subscription. You do not need special software. You need a web browser, a topic you care about, and the willingness to ask "Why?" five times.

Contents

A Practical Guide for CCRC Residents 2

Chapter 1: You Can Do This — Why This Method Works for CCRC Residents 5

What This Method Gives You 6

Who Has Done This Successfully? 6

Chapter 2: The SabuSense Way of Seeing the Whole Picture 6

What Is SabuSense? 6

Why Most Writing Stays on the Surface 7
Five SabuSense Principles for Better Writing 7
Chapter 3: The Five Whys and Five Hows — Your Questioning Engine 8
The Five Whys: Drilling Down to Root Causes 8
Classic Five Whys Example 9
Adapting the Five Whys for Writing 9
The Five Hows: Building Solutions 10
Why These Methods Produce Better Writing 10
Chapter 4: Perplexity — Your Free Research and Writing Partner 11
What Perplexity Does 11
What the Free Version Includes 11
Why Perplexity Is Ideal for This Method 12
Getting Started with Perplexity 12
Chapter 5: The Complete Workflow — From Topic to Polished Copy 13
Step 1: Think Before You Type (SabuSense — 5 Minutes) 13
Step 2: Ask Your First Question in Perplexity (Five Whys — Round 1) 13
Step 3: Ask "Why?" About the Key Finding (Rounds 2 Through 5) 14
Step 4: Identify Your Theme (SabuSense) 14
Step 5: Run the Five Hows for Solutions 14
Step 6: Ask Perplexity to Create Your Outline 15
Step 7: Ask Perplexity to Write Each Section 15
Step 8: Export and Format 15
Chapter 6: Example 1 — A Resident Council Report on Dining Services 16
SabuSense Thinking (Step 1) 16
Five Whys in Perplexity (Steps 2–3) 16
Identify the Theme (Step 4) 17
Five Hows in Perplexity (Step 5) 18
Build the Report (Steps 6–8) 18
Chapter 7: Example 2 — A Club Presentation on Staying Connected Through Technology 18
SabuSense Thinking 18
Five Whys in Perplexity 18
Theme 19
Five Hows 19
Build the Presentation 20

Chapter 8: Example 3 — A Book on Grandparents Raising Grandchildren 20
SabuSense Thinking 20
Five Whys in Perplexity 20
Theme 21
Five Hows 21
Build the Book 22
Chapter 9: Tips and Techniques to Make Your Writing Stronger 22
Tip 1: Let Perplexity's Suggested Questions Guide You 22
Tip 2: Branch Your Five Whys Into Multiple Chains 22
Tip 3: Use SabuSense Lens and Mirror Questions 22
Tip 4: Ask Perplexity to Challenge Your Conclusions 23
Tip 5: Cross-Pollinate Across Fields 23
Tip 6: Use Spaces to Organize Projects 23
Tip 7: Save Prompts That Work 24
Tip 8: Use Your Five Free Pro Searches Wisely 24
Chapter 10: From Perplexity Output to Finished Publication 24
For a Report 24
For a Presentation 25
For a KDP Paperback Book 25
Chapter 11: Spreading the Word in Your Community 26
You Are Now the Expert 26
Five Ways to Spread the Method 26
The Bigger Picture 27
Appendix A: Quick-Reference Workflow Card 27
The SabuSense-Five Whys-Perplexity Workflow 27
Appendix B: Sample Prompts You Can Copy and Use 28
For Finding the Center (SabuSense) 28
For the Five Whys 28
For the Five Hows 29
For Organizing 29
For Writing 29
For Strengthening 29
For KDP Metadata 29
Appendix C: Glossary of Terms 30
Appendix D: References and Resources 31

SabuSense 31
The Five Whys Method 32
Perplexity 32
Amazon KDP 33
KDP PUBLISHING METADATA 33
Title 33
Subtitle 33
Author 33
Book Description (for Amazon listing) 33
Seven KDP Keywords/Key Phrases 35
KDP Categories (select three) 35
Trim Size 35
Interior 35
Suggested Retail Price 35

Chapter 1: You Can Do This — Why This Method Works for CCRC Residents

If you can type a question into a search bar, you can use this method to produce professional-quality reports, presentations, and books. That is not an exaggeration. It is a fact, tested and proven through more than a dozen published Amazon books.

Here is the honest truth about writing and publishing in 2025 and 2026: the hardest part is no longer the writing itself. Perplexity, the free research tool at perplexity.ai, can research a topic, organize findings, and write clear, well-sourced text — all in response to your questions. It does the heavy lifting. You provide the direction, the judgment, and the life experience that make the final product meaningful.

What This Method Gives You

- **Speed.** A complete report can be drafted in one afternoon. A book can go from idea to published on Amazon in three days.
- **Quality.** Perplexity produces smooth, grammatically correct prose with cited sources. The output is often better than what a professional writer would produce on a first draft.
- **Zero cost.** The free version of Perplexity is all you need. No subscriptions. No software purchases.
- **Depth.** The SabuSense-Five Whys approach ensures your work goes deeper than surface observations. Your reports will identify root causes. Your books will have genuine insight.

Who Has Done This Successfully?

CCRC residents just like you. The author of this book has published more than thirteen Amazon paperbacks using this approach, on subjects ranging from community organizing to education policy to senior advocacy. Several of those books were on subjects where the author had no prior expertise. Perplexity provided the research. The Five Whys method provided the depth. The SabuSense way of thinking provided the direction.

You can do this. The rest of this book shows you how.

Chapter 2: The SabuSense Way of Seeing the Whole Picture

What Is SabuSense?

SabuSense is a body of work created by Lew Rhodes, who served for many years as Associate Executive Director of the American Association of School Administrators. Over decades,

Rhodes developed a way of understanding organizations and systems that he called "system-seeing." His writings are collected at sabusense.com.

The name comes from the story of Sabu, the Elephant Boy — a reference to the ancient parable of the blind men and the elephant. In the parable, each blind man touches a different part of the elephant and concludes it is a wall, a rope, a tree trunk. None of them perceives the whole animal. Rhodes asked: What would it take to be the person who sees the whole elephant?

That is what system-seeing means. And it is exactly what your writing needs.

Why Most Writing Stays on the Surface

When people write about problems — at their CCRC, in their community, in the world — they usually describe symptoms. The food is bad. Residents are lonely. Nobody comes to events. The roof leaks.

Symptoms are real, but writing about symptoms alone produces work that reads like a complaint list. It does not help anyone understand what is actually going on or what to do about it.

SabuSense thinking pushes you past symptoms to the connected system that produces them. Rhodes wrote about developing "a capacity that helped me 'know' by providing a way to see through organizational complexity to its simple root causes."

Five SabuSense Principles for Better Writing

1. Look for Connections, Not Just Parts. Every problem is connected to other problems. When residents skip meals, it may connect to food quality, which connects to contract

negotiations, which connects to resident governance. Trace the connections.

2. Find the Center. Every system has a core purpose. Rhodes called it "the center from which all system relationships are defined." Before you write, ask: What is the fundamental purpose or value at the heart of this topic? That is your center. Everything in your document should connect back to it.

3. Use Lenses and Mirrors. A LENS helps you look forward — what is possible, what could be, what trends suggest. A MIRROR helps you look backward — what happened before, what was tried, what was learned. Good writing uses both.

4. Break the Belief Cycle. Rhodes warned about the "see-what-we-believe / believe-what-we-see" trap. We tend to find only evidence that confirms what we already think. The Five Whys method, run through Perplexity, breaks this cycle by surfacing facts and perspectives you did not expect.

5. Cross Boundaries. Solutions found in one field often apply in another. Hospitals solve problems that CCRCs also face. Hotels manage dining at scale. Other countries handle elder care differently. Deliberately searching across fields produces the most original insights.

Chapter 3: The Five Whys and Five Hows — Your Questioning Engine

The Five Whys: Drilling Down to Root Causes

The Five Whys is a technique developed by Sakichi Toyoda, founder of Toyota Industries, as part of the Toyota Production System. The concept is simple: when you want to understand something deeply, ask "Why?" five times. Each answer becomes the basis for the next question.

This is the engine that drives your research in Perplexity. You type a question. Perplexity answers. You read the answer, find the most important or surprising point, and ask "Why?" about that point. Five rounds of this, and you have gone from a surface observation to a root cause.

Classic Five Whys Example

Problem: The car will not start.

- **Why?** The battery is dead.
- **Why is the battery dead?** The alternator is not charging it.
- **Why is the alternator not charging?** The alternator belt broke.
- **Why did the belt break?** It was old and had never been replaced.
- **Why was it never replaced?** The car was not being maintained on schedule.

Root cause: A breakdown in the maintenance system — not just a dead battery.

If you stopped at the first "Why," you would charge the battery and have the same problem next month. The fifth "Why" reveals the real fix.

Adapting the Five Whys for Writing

You are not fixing cars. You are developing insight for reports, presentations, and books. So adapt the questions:

- Why does this situation exist?
- Why has it gotten worse (or better)?
- Why has no one fixed it?
- Why should people care?
- Why is this the right time to act?

Each of these, typed into Perplexity, produces a sourced, detailed answer that becomes raw material for your writing.

The Five Hows: Building Solutions

The American Society for Quality teaches a companion technique: after you discover root causes with the Five Whys, you develop solutions with the Five Hows. Each "How?" drills deeper into implementation specifics.

Example — following up on the CCRC dining issue:

- **How** can residents gain influence over food service contracts? Form a dining advocacy committee.
- **How** should the committee be organized? With representatives from each building or neighborhood.
- **How** will the committee get access to contract details? By exercising rights under the CCRC residency agreement.
- **How** will recommendations reach management? Through quarterly formal presentations with written proposals.
- **How** will progress be measured? Through before-and-after resident satisfaction surveys.

Enter each "How?" into Perplexity just as you enter the "Why?" questions. Perplexity researches best practices, provides examples from other communities, and writes polished text you can use directly.

Why These Methods Produce Better Writing

Most people skip the questioning stage and go straight to writing. They produce surface-level work because they never dug beneath the surface. The Five Whys forces depth. The Five Hows forces practicality. Together, they ensure your writing has both insight and usefulness — the two things readers value most.

Chapter 4: Perplexity — Your Free Research and Writing Partner

What Perplexity Does

Perplexity (perplexity.ai) is a free internet research and answer tool. When you type a question, it searches the internet, reads relevant sources, and writes you a clear, organized answer with numbered source citations you can check.

Think of it as a research assistant who reads hundreds of articles instantly and gives you a polished summary — for free.

What the Free Version Includes

The free version of Perplexity gives you everything you need for the methods in this book:

- **Unlimited searches.** Ask as many questions as you want, every day.
- **Follow-up questions in threads.** This is the most important feature for the Five Whys method. Each conversation in Perplexity is a "thread" that remembers everything you have discussed. When you ask your second "Why?" question, Perplexity understands it in the context of the first answer. Your third question builds on the first two. This is what makes the Five Whys chain work so smoothly.
- **Suggested related questions.** After every answer, Perplexity displays three or four suggested follow-up questions. These are often exactly the next "Why?" question you need. Click one to continue your chain without typing.
- **Source citations.** Every claim is footnoted with a clickable source. This gives your writing built-in credibility.

- **Five Pro searches per day.** These use more powerful reasoning for complex questions. Save them for your most important "Why?" in each chain.
- **Spaces.** Organize your threads into topic-specific workspaces. Create a Space for each project.
- **Export.** Download any thread as a document you can open in Word.

Why Perplexity Is Ideal for This Method

Other tools can answer questions, but Perplexity's thread system is what makes the Five Whys method work. Users consistently report that Perplexity retains context across long multi-step conversations better than other tools. One user observed: "It appears to retain the context of previous interactions and the reasoning behind them, rather than just focusing on the most recent message."

This means your fifth "Why?" question benefits from everything Perplexity learned in the first four rounds. The answers get richer and more connected as you go deeper.

Getting Started with Perplexity

1. Open your web browser.
2. Type perplexity.ai in the address bar and press Enter.
3. You can start asking questions immediately.
4. To save your work, create a free account using your email address.
5. Once logged in, click "Spaces" in the sidebar to organize your projects.

That is all there is to it.

Chapter 5: The Complete Workflow — From Topic to Polished Copy

Here is the step-by-step process that combines SabuSense thinking, the Five Whys and Five Hows, and Perplexity into a single workflow. Follow these steps for every report, presentation, or book you create.

Step 1: Think Before You Type (SabuSense — 5 Minutes)

Before opening Perplexity, take five minutes to think about your topic using SabuSense principles:

- What is the real subject? (Not the surface topic, but what it is really about.)
- What is the CENTER — the core purpose or value at stake?
- What system am I looking at? What might be connected to what?

Write one sentence that captures the center.

Example: "I want to write about poor meal quality at our CCRC. But the center is not food — it is the connection between resident wellbeing, social life at mealtimes, and whether residents have a voice in the decisions that affect their daily lives."

Step 2: Ask Your First Question in Perplexity (Five Whys — Round 1)

Open Perplexity. Start a new thread. Type a broad, direct question about your topic.

Example prompt: "Why are residents of continuing care retirement communities frequently dissatisfied with dining services?"

Press Enter. Read the full answer. Note which points surprise you or seem most important.

Step 3: Ask "Why?" About the Key Finding (Rounds 2 Through 5)

Pick the most significant point from the answer. Type a follow-up question that asks "Why?" about that point.

Round 2 example: "Why do CCRC dining programs often lack meaningful resident input in menu planning?"

Read the answer. Pick the key point. Ask again.

Round 3 example: "Why do contracted food service companies resist adapting menus based on resident feedback?"

Round 4 example: "Why do CCRC management contracts not include resident satisfaction requirements?"

Round 5 example: "Why do residents lack organized advocacy power to influence CCRC contract negotiations?"

Step 4: Identify Your Theme (SabuSense)

Step back and look at the full chain. What root cause did the fifth answer reveal? How does it connect to the center you identified in Step 1?

Example theme: "CCRC dining dissatisfaction is not about recipes — it is about governance. Residents lack an organized voice in the contract negotiations that determine their daily quality of life."

That is your theme. That is what makes your writing meaningful rather than just another complaint.

Step 5: Run the Five Hows for Solutions

Start a new chain of questions using "How?"

Example: "How can CCRC residents organize to gain influence over food service contract negotiations?"

Continue for five rounds, each drilling into more specific implementation details.

Step 6: Ask Perplexity to Create Your Outline

Now type a prompt that asks Perplexity to organize everything into a structure:

Example prompt: "Based on our discussion, create an outline for a 10-page resident council report on improving CCRC dining through resident advocacy and food service contract reform. Include an executive summary, main findings, and specific recommendations."

Perplexity produces a clear, logical outline drawing on everything in your thread.

Step 7: Ask Perplexity to Write Each Section

For each section in the outline, type a prompt:

Example prompt: "Write a clear, detailed section on why CCRC food service contracts typically exclude resident satisfaction measures. Write for an audience of CCRC residents and administrators. Include specific examples."

Perplexity writes polished, sourced text that is ready to use.

Step 8: Export and Format

Copy the text into Microsoft Word. Format it for your purpose:

- For a report: Add a title page, headings, and page numbers.
- For a presentation: Transfer key points to slides.
- For a KDP book: Format to 6-by-9-inch pages, 16-point Verdana, 1.5 line spacing.

The whole process — from opening Perplexity to having a formatted draft — can take as little as two to three hours.

Chapter 6: Example 1 — A Resident Council Report on Dining Services

This example walks through every step so you can see exactly how the workflow operates in practice.

SabuSense Thinking (Step 1)

Surface topic: Residents complain about the food.

The center: Resident voice and wellbeing — whether the people who eat three meals a day in this community have any power over the quality of those meals.

System connections: Food quality connects to food service contracts, which connect to CCRC management decisions, which connect to resident governance structures, which connect to resident organizing.

Five Whys in Perplexity (Steps 2–3)

Open Perplexity. Start a new thread. Type each question after reading the previous answer.

Question 1: "Why are residents of continuing care retirement communities frequently dissatisfied with dining services?"

Perplexity answers with multiple factors: limited menu variety, institutional preparation methods, dietary restrictions reducing choices, budget constraints, and lack of resident input.

Question 2: "Why do CCRC dining programs typically lack meaningful resident input in menu planning and food service decisions?"

Perplexity explains: surveys are infrequent, feedback is not tracked, food service is contracted to outside companies with fixed menus, and staff turnover means institutional memory is lost.

Question 3: "Why do contracted food service companies in senior living resist adapting their menus based on resident feedback?"

Perplexity explains: standardized menus reduce costs, contracts are negotiated in advance, regional managers prioritize efficiency, and there is no contractual penalty for low satisfaction.

Question 4: "Why do CCRC management contracts with food service companies not include meaningful resident satisfaction requirements?"

Perplexity explains: contract negotiations prioritize cost control, residents are not represented at the negotiating table, and management often lacks data on what residents actually want.

Question 5: "Why do CCRC residents lack organized advocacy power to influence the contracts that determine their quality of life?"

Perplexity explains: resident councils often have advisory-only status, there is no tradition of resident collective bargaining, and many residents are unaware of their rights under CCRC agreements.

Identify the Theme (Step 4)

Root cause: Residents have no organized power to influence the contracts that govern their daily experience.

Theme for the report: "Improving CCRC Dining: Why Better Governance Matters More Than Better Recipes."

Five Hows in Perplexity (Step 5)

Question 1: "How can CCRC residents organize an effective dining advocacy committee?"

Question 2: "How should a resident dining committee structure its relationship with CCRC management?"

Question 3: "How can residents access and influence food service contract terms?"

Question 4: "How have other CCRCs successfully improved dining through resident advocacy?"

Question 5: "How should a resident dining committee measure and report its impact?"

Build the Report (Steps 6–8)

Ask Perplexity to outline and write each section. Export to Word. Format. Print and distribute to your resident council.

Total time for a polished 10-page report: approximately 3 hours.

Chapter 7: Example 2 — A Club Presentation on Staying Connected Through Technology

SabuSense Thinking

Surface topic: Getting more residents to use technology.

The center: Connection and independence — technology is a tool for maintaining relationships and autonomy, not an end in itself.

Five Whys in Perplexity

Question 1: "What are the main barriers to technology adoption among residents of continuing care retirement communities?"

Question 2: "Why do many older adults fear that using computers and phones will cause irreversible mistakes or damage?"

Question 3: "Why do technology training programs for seniors have such low long-term success rates?"

Question 4: "Why is peer-to-peer mentoring more effective than classroom instruction for senior technology learning?"

Question 5: "Why do most CCRCs not invest in structured peer technology mentoring programs?"

Theme

Root cause: CCRCs offer the wrong kind of technology support — formal classes instead of the peer mentoring that actually works.

Presentation title: "Learning from Each Other: Why Peer Mentoring Is the Key to Technology Confidence."

Five Hows

Question 1: "How can a CCRC set up a peer technology mentoring program?"

Question 2: "How should volunteer tech mentors be trained and supported?"

Question 3: "How can a mentoring program reach residents who are most resistant to technology?"

Question 4: "How do successful senior peer mentoring programs measure their results?"

Question 5: "How can the program sustain itself as mentors age or move to higher levels of care?"

Build the Presentation

Ask Perplexity: "Create a 12-slide presentation outline on peer technology mentoring in CCRCs. The audience is residents and administrators. Include a slide proposing a pilot program."

Then for each slide: "Write the talking points for Slide 4: Why Peer Mentoring Works Better Than Classes."

Total time for a polished 12-slide presentation with speaker notes: approximately 2 hours.

Chapter 8: Example 3 — A Book on Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

SabuSense Thinking

Surface topic: Grandparents who are primary caregivers for grandchildren.

The center: The wellbeing of children who need stable, loving homes — and the grandparents who provide them despite systems that fail to support them.

System connections: Family crisis (addiction, incarceration) connects to child welfare placements, which connect to kinship care policies, which connect to funding disparities, which connect to political advocacy gaps.

Five Whys in Perplexity

Question 1: "Why is the number of grandparents raising grandchildren increasing in the United States?"

Question 2: "Why does the child welfare system place children with grandparents but fail to provide adequate financial and legal support?"

Question 3: "Why are kinship care providers given fewer resources than licensed foster parents serving the same children?"

Question 4: "Why have state legislatures been slow to pass kinship care parity laws despite evidence that kinship placements produce better outcomes?"

Question 5: "Why do grandparents raising grandchildren lack an effective national advocacy organization?"

Theme

Root cause: Grandparent caregivers are invisible in the policy system — they lack organized advocacy, and the systems that place children with them were built around a different model.

Book title: "Hidden Heroes: How America's Grandparent Caregivers Save Children While a Broken System Looks Away."

Five Hows

Question 1: "How can grandparent caregivers organize for political advocacy?"

Question 2: "How can kinship care parity legislation be drafted to survive legal challenges?"

Question 3: "How can grandparents navigate the existing social services system to get maximum support?"

Question 4: "How can faith communities and CCRCs support grandparent caregivers in their membership?"

Question 5: "How can a book like this be used as an organizing tool for advocacy?"

Build the Book

Ask Perplexity to create a chapter-by-chapter outline, then write each chapter using focused prompts. Export, format in Word, and publish through Amazon KDP.

Total time from idea to published Amazon paperback: approximately 3 days.

Chapter 9: Tips and Techniques to Make Your Writing Stronger

Tip 1: Let Perplexity's Suggested Questions Guide You

After every answer, Perplexity shows three or four suggested follow-up questions at the bottom of the screen. These are free gifts. They often point directly to the next layer of insight. If a suggested question aligns with your Five Whys chain, click it instead of typing. This saves time and frequently reveals angles you had not considered.

Tip 2: Branch Your Five Whys Into Multiple Chains

One topic usually has multiple root causes. After completing your first Five Whys chain, go back to an early answer and follow a different point through its own chain.

Example: Your first chain on dining followed "lack of resident input" to a root cause in governance. Now go back to Question 1 and follow "dietary restrictions reducing options" through five more Whys. You might discover a root cause in poor communication between medical staff and the kitchen. Each chain becomes a section of your report or a chapter of your book.

Tip 3: Use SabuSense Lens and Mirror Questions

Add these to your Perplexity threads to deepen analysis:

Lens questions (looking forward): - “What innovative solutions are being tried elsewhere for this problem?” - “What would an ideal system look like?” - “What trends suggest this will get better or worse in the next five years?”

Mirror questions (reflecting on the past): - “How was this handled 20 years ago, and what changed?” - “What reform efforts have been tried, and why did they succeed or fail?” - “What can we learn from how other countries handle this?”

Tip 4: Ask Perplexity to Challenge Your Conclusions

After developing your theme, type: “What are the strongest counterarguments to the claim that [your theme]?”

This forces you to confront opposing views and strengthens your final product. It also breaks the SabuSense “see-what-we-believe” trap.

Tip 5: Cross-Pollinate Across Fields

Use Perplexity to deliberately search across boundaries:

- “How do hospitals handle the same kind of problem that CCRCs face with [your issue]?”
- “What can senior living communities learn from the hotel industry about [your issue]?”
- “How do retirement communities in other countries address [your issue]?”

These cross-boundary searches often produce the most original and compelling insights.

Tip 6: Use Spaces to Organize Projects

Create a Space in Perplexity for each project. Name it clearly — “Dining Report” or “Grandparents Book.” Every thread you start within that Space stays organized together.

To create a Space: Log into your free account, click "Spaces" in the left sidebar, click "Create a Space," name it, and start working.

Tip 7: Save Prompts That Work

Keep a list of your most effective prompts. Appendix B provides starter prompts you can copy and adapt for any project.

Tip 8: Use Your Five Free Pro Searches Wisely

Each day, you get five searches that use Perplexity's most powerful reasoning. Save these for:

- Your fifth "Why?" question — the one that reveals the root cause
- Your outline prompt — when you want the most thoughtful structure
- Counterargument prompts — when you want the strongest challenge to your thinking

Use regular free searches for everything else.

Chapter 10: From Perplexity Output to Finished Publication

This chapter bridges to the production process. For detailed formatting and publishing mechanics, see the companion book on the three-stage Perplexity-Word-KDP workflow.

For a Report

1. Export your Perplexity thread.
2. Open it in Microsoft Word.
3. Add a title page with the report title, your name, the date, and the recipient.

4. Format with clear headings, readable font (14- to 16-point), and page numbers.
5. Write a one-paragraph executive summary at the beginning.
6. Print copies or email the PDF.

For a Presentation

1. Export your Perplexity thread.
2. Open PowerPoint or Google Slides.
3. Create one slide per main point from your outline.
4. Use large text (at least 24 points) with minimal words per slide.
5. Put detailed talking points in the Notes section of each slide.

For a KDP Paperback Book

1. Export your Perplexity thread.
2. Open Microsoft Word. Set page size to 6 inches by 9 inches.
3. Set font to Verdana 16 point with 1.5 line spacing.
4. Add a Table of Contents, chapter headings, and page numbers.
5. Export to PDF.
6. Go to kdp.amazon.com, create a new paperback, and upload.
7. Use Perplexity to generate your book description, keywords, and categories by asking: “Write an Amazon KDP book description for a book titled [your title] about [your theme] aimed at [your audience].”

Chapter 11: Spreading the Word in Your Community

You Are Now the Expert

Once you have produced your first report, presentation, or book using this method, you know something valuable that most of your neighbors do not. You know how to turn any topic into a polished, published document in hours instead of weeks. Share that knowledge.

Five Ways to Spread the Method

1. Give a live demonstration. Reserve a meeting room. Bring a laptop and connect it to a TV or projector. Open Perplexity and run a Five Whys chain in real time on a topic your audience cares about. Let them watch the answers build on each other. This is the most convincing demonstration because they see how fast and easy it is.

2. Start a writing group. Invite five or six residents to meet weekly. Each person picks a topic and works through the workflow during the week. At each meeting, share progress, swap tips, and celebrate publications.

3. Hand out the Quick-Reference Card. Photocopy Appendix A and distribute it. Post it on bulletin boards. Include it in your community newsletter.

4. Publish and credit the method. When you produce a report or book, include a note: "Developed using the SabuSense-Five Whys-Perplexity method." This sparks curiosity and conversation.

5. Help one person at a time. Sit with a neighbor. Open Perplexity on their computer. Walk them through one Five Whys chain on something they care about. Once they see their own questions produce polished, sourced answers, they are hooked.

The Bigger Picture

Lew Rhodes spent decades helping people see through organizational complexity to root causes. Sakichi Toyoda's Five Whys has been solving problems since the 1950s. Perplexity makes expert-level research free and instant. By combining these three elements, CCRC residents with lifetimes of experience can produce work that genuinely helps their communities and preserves wisdom for future generations.

The tools are free. The method is simple. Your experience is the irreplaceable ingredient.

Start today. Open Perplexity. Ask your first "Why?"

Appendix A: Quick-Reference Workflow Card

The SabuSense-Five Whys-Perplexity Workflow

THINK (SabuSense — 5 Minutes)

1. What is my topic?
2. What is the CENTER — the core purpose or value at stake?
3. What SYSTEM am I looking at? What connects to what?
4. Write one sentence capturing the center.

ASK WHY (Five Whys in Perplexity — 20 to 40 Minutes)

1. Open perplexity.ai. Start a new thread.
2. Type your first broad question about the topic.
3. Read the answer. Pick the most important point.
4. Ask WHY about that point.
5. Repeat "Why?" three more times (five rounds total).
6. Identify the ROOT CAUSE in the fifth answer.

ASK HOW (Five Hows in Perplexity — 20 to 40 Minutes)

1. Ask HOW to address the root cause.
2. Ask HOW four more times, getting more specific each round.
3. You now have both the problem and the solution.

ORGANIZE AND WRITE (Perplexity — 30 to 60 Minutes)

1. State your THEME in one sentence.
2. Ask Perplexity to create an OUTLINE.
3. Ask Perplexity to WRITE each section.

FORMAT AND PUBLISH (Word and KDP — Varies)

1. EXPORT from Perplexity.
2. FORMAT in Word.
3. PUBLISH via KDP, email, or print.

Appendix B: Sample Prompts You Can Copy and Use

For Finding the Center (SabuSense)

"What is the fundamental purpose or core value at stake in [your topic]?"

"What are the main parts of the system involved in [your topic] and how are they connected?"

For the Five Whys

"Why is [problem or situation] happening in [context]?"

"Why has [the point from the previous answer] gotten worse over time?"

"Why has [the issue] not been solved despite [efforts mentioned in the previous answer]?"

"Why should [your audience] care about [the root cause you discovered]?"

For the Five Hows

"How can [your audience or stakeholders] address [the root cause]?"

"How should [the proposed solution] be organized and structured?"

"How have other communities or organizations successfully implemented [the solution]?"

"How can progress on [the solution] be measured and reported?"

For Organizing

"Based on our discussion, create an outline for a [length] [report/presentation/book] on [your theme]. The audience is [your audience]. Include an introduction, main sections, and recommendations."

For Writing

"Write a clear, detailed section on [topic] for [audience]. Use an accessible, encouraging tone. Include specific examples and cite sources."

For Strengthening

"What are the strongest counterarguments to the claim that [your theme]?"

"What can we learn from how [another field or country] handles [your topic]?"

For KDP Metadata

"Write an Amazon book description for a book titled title about theme aimed at [audience]."

"Suggest seven Amazon search keywords for a book about [topic] aimed at [audience]."

"Suggest three Amazon categories for a book about [topic]."

Appendix C: Glossary of Terms

CCRC (Continuing Care Retirement Community): A residential community for older adults that typically offers independent living, assisted living, and nursing care on one campus.

Five Hows: A companion technique to the Five Whys that develops practical solutions by asking "How?" five times, with each answer providing more specific implementation details.

Five Whys: A questioning technique developed by Sakichi Toyoda that discovers root causes by asking "Why?" five times, with each answer forming the basis of the next question.

KDP (Kindle Direct Publishing): Amazon's free self-publishing platform that allows anyone to publish and sell paperback books, hardcovers, and ebooks worldwide.

Perplexity: A free internet research and answer tool at perplexity.ai that synthesizes information from multiple sources and provides written answers with source citations.

Pro Search: A more powerful search mode in Perplexity that uses advanced reasoning. Free users get five Pro searches per day.

Related Questions: Follow-up questions that Perplexity suggests after every answer, offering directions for deeper exploration.

Root Cause: The fundamental underlying reason for a problem or situation, as opposed to surface symptoms.

SabuSense: A framework for "system-seeing" developed by Lew Rhodes (sabusense.com) that emphasizes understanding situations as connected wholes rather than isolated parts.

Space: A feature in Perplexity that lets you organize related research threads into topic-specific workspaces.

System-Seeing: Lew Rhodes' term for the ability to perceive organizations and situations as interconnected systems rather than separate parts.

Thread: A conversation in Perplexity that maintains context across multiple questions and answers, allowing each question to build on previous exchanges.

Appendix D: References and Resources

SabuSense

Rhodes, Lewis A. "The One Thing! …a simple way to understand all kinds of systems." SabuSense, 2004. Available at: sabusense.com

Rhodes, Lewis A. "Making Sense of the Baldrige." SabuSense. Available at: sabusense.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/02/making-sense.pdf

Rhodes, Lewis A. "Putting Themselves Out of Business." SabuSense. Available at: sabusense.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/02/putting-unions-mgt.pdf

Rhodes, Lewis A. "New Understanding: The X-factor at Work." SabuSense, 2012. Available at: sabusense.com/?page_id=160

Rhodes, Lewis A. Resources collection. SabuSense. Available at: sabusense.com/?page_id=235

The Five Whys Method

American Society for Quality (ASQ). “Five Whys and Five Hows.” Available at: asq.org/quality-resources/five-whys

Toyoda, Sakichi. The Five Whys technique, as documented in the Toyota Production System.

International Institute for Management Development (IMD). “How to Use the 5 Whys Method to Solve Complex Problems.” 2026. Available at: imd.org/blog/strategy/the-5-whys-technique/

Atlassian. “Complete Guide to the 5 Whys Exercise.” Available at: atlassian.com/team-playbook/plays/5-whys

ONC Practice Management. “Using the 5 Whys Method to Identify and Solve Problems.” April 2021. Available at: oncpracticemanagement.com

Perplexity

Perplexity Help Center. “What Is a Thread?” Available at: perplexity.ai/help-center/en/articles/10354769-what-is-a-thread

Perplexity. “Getting Started with Perplexity.” 2024. Available at: perplexity.ai/hub/blog/getting-started-with-perplexity

G2. “My In-Depth Perplexity Review: Is Pro Worth It in 2026?” February 2026. Available at: learn.g2.com/perplexity-ai-review

AnswerManiac. “Perplexity: Complete Guide 2026.” January 2026. Available at: answermaniac.ai/blog/complete-guide-perplexity-ai-search-engine-2026

Amazon KDP

Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing. “Make Your Book More Discoverable with Keywords.” Available at: kdp.amazon.com/help/topic/G200652170

Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing. “KDP Categories.” Available at: kdp.amazon.com/help/topic/G200652170

Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing. “Metadata Guidelines for Books.” Available at: kdp.amazon.com/help/topic/G201097560

This book was developed using the SabuSense-Five Whys-Perplexity method it describes.

KDP PUBLISHING METADATA

Title

Seeing Deeper with Perplexity

Subtitle

How CCRC Residents Can Use the SabuSense Way of Thinking and the Five Whys Method with Perplexity to Produce Reports, Presentations, and Books — Fast, Free, and Polished

Author

Mel Haas and Perplexity.ai
Mel’s Amazon Books

Book Description (for Amazon listing)

You have a lifetime of knowledge, experience, and wisdom. Now you have a fast, easy, free way to share it.

Seeing Deeper with Perplexity shows residents of continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs) how to produce professional-quality reports, presentations, and Amazon books using three powerful tools that cost nothing:

The SabuSense "system-seeing" method — a way of thinking developed by educator Lew Rhodes that moves you past surface symptoms to the connected root causes underneath.

The Five Whys and Five Hows — questioning techniques that drill from observation to insight to practical solutions in just five rounds.

Perplexity — the free internet research tool at perplexity.ai that researches any topic, organizes findings, and writes polished, source-cited text in response to your questions.

This book shows you how to combine all three into a single repeatable workflow. Step-by-step instructions guide you from choosing a topic to having publication-ready copy — often in a single afternoon.

Three complete worked examples show the method in action: — A resident council report on CCRC dining services — A club presentation on helping seniors stay connected through technology — A full-length book on grandparents raising grandchildren

You will also find advanced tips including branching your research, using lens and mirror questions, cross-pollinating ideas across fields, and having Perplexity challenge your own conclusions.

No paid subscriptions needed. No technical expertise required. If you can type a question, you can use this method.

Written by a fellow CCRC resident who has published more than thirteen Amazon paperbacks using this exact approach.

Includes a quick-reference workflow card, sample prompts you can copy and use, and a complete glossary.

Your experience is the irreplaceable ingredient. This book gives you the method. Start today.

Seven KDP Keywords/Key Phrases

1. senior self publishing guide
2. Perplexity research writing
3. five whys method books
4. CCRC resident activities writing
5. retirement community publishing
6. seniors write and publish books
7. free tools self publishing seniors

KDP Categories (select three)

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2. Nonfiction > Computers & Technology > Digital Audio, Video & Photography > Web Publishing
3. Nonfiction > Reference > Writing, Research & Publishing Guides > Writing Skills

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